

October 16, 1950

Dr. David Harker
Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn
99 Livingston Street
Brooklyn 2, New York

Dear Dave:

I do not remember whether or not I answered your letter of September 6 when it arrived. At any rate, it will not do any harm for me to answer it again.

Our protein program is moving along very well. It is in general considerably different from that which you sketch out in your letter, in that we do not propose to try to work out a structure from a set of diffraction data without any a priori assumptions. You know that our program of determining the structures of amino acids and peptides and other simpler substances was for the purpose of providing metrical information that would permit us to predict structures for proteins, which could then be subjected to experimental tests.

The first part of our attack is, however, similar to yours -- that of examining data for globular proteins to find the distribution of globules with high atomic density. This has already been done here for lysozyme, and I hope that the results will be published before long. They are held up at present because we have been so excited by our success in the prediction of structures that we are concentrating on this aspect of the problem.

I agree with you that the whole protein problem is such an important one that it is well worth while to have a large number of people working on it.

With best wishes to you, I am

Sincerely yours,

Linus Pauling:W